

convoy should halt, because a serious revolt against the new Grand Duke Basil had broken out, with the Cossacks supporting 'sons' of the former Tsar Feodor. Astrakhan had from the beginning refused to recognize Basil, and the latter had sent a force of 20,000 men to subjugate the place: fighting was in progress. Then in September, one after the other, all five of the party fell seriously ill with fever: the most that the authorities in Tsaritsin would allow was that they should disembark and live in a small hut, where they passed the cruelly cold winter months. On Friday in Passion Week of 1607 the 'Sergeant-Major' Francisco Riodolid died: on Holy Thursday following Lay Brother John. The survivors suffered from hunger, from lack of coverings in a half-barbarous village, where the partisans of Basil maltreated them and plotted to make away with them.

However, at Pentecost, 1607, a rumour reached Tsaritsin that Dmitri was still living, and caused a majority of the inhabitants to rise against the "governor", and send him bound to Astrakhan, while a soi-disant "prince" and brother of Dmitri marched from Astrakhan on Tsaritsin in order to come to an issue with the troops of Basil. The Cossacks of this force from Astrakhan and their commander proved benefactors for the Carmelites, gave them provisions and provided them with a craft and 20 rowers, with which they left Tsaritsin, 24.7.1607: and on 7.8.1607 they safely reached Astrakhan, where the governor received them well but, as they were without a written pass, would not allow them to sail for Persia until the "prince" mentioned above had been consulted and authorized their departure. Here Zain-ul-'Abidin Baig tried to put difficulties in their path, for he was detained, accused of having vilified Dmitri and his partisans. These surmounted, they left Astrakhan, 26.8.1607, being given an escort of Cossacks to accompany them down the Volga till where it flowed into the Caspian Sea, a week's sailing: and, even when they reached the Persian sailing-vessel which had contracted to take them, it was still loading, took two days more to do so and then, after a passage of 100 miles, lay at anchor for 24 days till 22.9.1607, before a favourable wind was found. The Carmelites were finally disembarked some ten miles from Baku, 27.9.1607. (In this twentieth century it needed to be shown how a party of men in a hurry to reach their objective should come to take more than three years to cover the distance between Rome and the shores of the Caspian.)

Their kindly protector, Pope Paul V, had begun to be anxious about their fate, as the following Brief he wrote to Shah 'Abbas on 22.3.1608 (Arch. Vat. Arm. XLV, vol. 3, p. 173 (180) shows:

"Illustrious and most puissant Shah 'Abbas king of the Persians greeting and the light  
"of the Divine grace.

"As We have signified to You by several other letters of Ours, but particularly that  
"which recently We gave Our beloved son John of Avila the Spaniard for Your Highness,  
"at the beginning of Our Pontificate We at once took care that Our beloved sons, the  
"Religious Paul Simon, John Thaddeus and Vincent brothers and priests of the Order of  
"Discalced Carmelites, whom Our predecessor of happy memory, Clement VIII, had  
"already dispatched to Persia, should accelerate the journey begun and bring to Your  
"Highness Our letter to witness of Our especial liking for You, so that they might reveal  
"to You the zealously of Our goodwill so well-disposed toward You.

"But, because We have up till now heard nothing about the arrival of these men in  
"Persia, although We understood that they had already at that time begun their journey  
"in company of Your envoy who was returning to Your Highness from" (the Court of  
"Our very dear son in Christ, Rudolph the Emperor elect—they had joined him at the  
"Court of the Grand Duke of Muscovy, for they were then staying at his Court—so We  
"suspect that Our aforesaid sons and servants of God are being delayed by some hindrance,  
"perhaps detained by the Muscovites themselves, or by the Tatars with the occurrence of  
"the present disturbances in that realm, or else by the Turks who live on the Caspian  
"Sea. But in whatever manner they are being stopped from reaching You, so much the  
"more do We lament as We more keenly desire every day to be informed—because You well